

Elements of the Motsuji Temple Garden:

artificial mound (*tsukiyama*), cove beach (*subama*), standing stone within the pond, and the cape stones (*dejima isbigumi*)

The Motsuji Temple Garden was constructed according to Heian period (794–1185) principles of garden design that focused on the use of gardens to replicate larger natural landscapes in miniature form. The garden's central pond, *oizumigaike*, represents the sea, with additional features that emulate a beach, a rugged coastline, and a stream that flows from the mountains to the sea.

Large rock formations on the southwest shore of the pond (*tsukiyama*) recreate the rugged coast of Japan, while a peninsula along the eastern edge (*subama*) simulates a coastal promontory that changes shape with the ebb and flow of the lake.

Additional rock formations, called *dejima isbigumi*, line the southeast shore. Nearby, within the pond, another rock formation creates the impression of a coastal shoreline. Its focal point, the Ikenaka Tateishi, is a single stone that rises 2.5 meters above the surface of the pond.

Careful restoration of the Motsuji Temple pond and garden has restored the original majesty of this Pure Land Buddhist landscape. While similar gardens once existed at temples and noble residences across Japan, Motsuji Temple is one of the few remaining examples of twelfth-century Pure Land Buddhist garden architecture.